

and sometimes practical, authority in social affairs. The* secularization of political thought, which was to be the work of the next two centuries, had profound reactions on social speculation, and by the Restoration the whole perspective, at least in England, has been revolutionized. Religion has been converted from the keystone which holds together the social edifice into one department within it, and the idea of a rule of right is replaced by economic expediency as the arbiter of policy and the criterion of conduct. From a spiritual being, who, in order to survive, must devote a reasonable attention to economic interests, man seems sometimes to have become an economic animal, who will be prudent, nevertheless, if he takes due precautions to assure his spiritual well-being.

The result is an attitude which forms so fundamental a part of modern political thought, that both its precarious philosophical basis, and the contrast which it offers with the conceptions of earlier generations, are commonly forgotten. Its essence is a dualism which regards the secular and the religious aspects of life, not as successive stages within a larger unity, but as parallel and independent provinces, governed by different laws, judged by different standards, and amenable to different authorities. To the most representative minds of the Reformation, as of

the Middle
Ages, a philosophy which treated the
transactions of
commerce and the institutions of society as
indifferent to
religion would have appeared, not merely
morally repre-
hensible, but intellectually absurd. Holding
as their
first assumption that the ultimate social
authority is
the will of God, and that temporal interests
are a tran-
sitory episode in the life of spirits which are
eternal,
they state the rules to which the social
conduct of the
Christian must conform, and, when
circumstances allow,
organize the discipline by which those rules
may be
enforced. By their successors in the
eighteenth century
the philosophy of Indifferentism, though
rarely forma-